

## **RBTS targets 250 exhibitors from 30 nations**

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THE official venue for the second Brunei Darussalam International Defence Exhibition (Bridex) next year is set at the Empire Hotel & Country Club, worth about 15,000 sq metres of exhibition area, both indoors as well as outdoors according to the Royal Brunei Technical Services (RBTS) yesterday.

To be held between August 11 and 16 2009, Bridex targets to gather 250 exhibitors from 30 countries. The defence exhibition will be the first in its kind regionally, to have it integratedly focused on air, land and marine defence and home land security in the Asia Pacific Region.

Bridex will focus on a network-enabled approach and improved access to Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR). Several conferences will also be held in conjunction with the exhibition.

Bridex is currently being actively promoted whereby next week RBTS will have a part in the Singapore Airshow 2008, which will be held from February 19 to 24. RBTS's participation is hoped to help attract exhibitors for Bridex 2009.

Besides providing a platform for buyers and sellers to gather, Bridex, jointly organised by the RBTS and World Aerospace also has a host nation perspective such as economic spin-offs; encouraging foreign investors into the country and to develop the local defence industry.

According to RBTS, Bridex, will continue to encourage the creation of alliances or partnership towards generating new businesses between local SMEs and prime contractors through providing support such as arranging one-on-one business meetings, hence the venue of which the event has been picked to be held.

The prospectus of the exhibition will be gauged through the projects awarded and contracts signed through Bridex 2009, such as the joint operation centre, Mistral command post (MCP) and Command and Control Systems and Components (C4I) equipment — agendas in the Ministry of Defence's White Paper.

In December last year, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the World Aerospace Sdn Bhd, the main organiser of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (Lima) 2007 and RBTS.

The World Aerospace Sdn Bhd role in Bridex 2009, according to RBTS is to mainly market and manage Bridex 2009 as well as to develop two main areas; human capacity and organisational development. The progression in these two areas will involve World Aerospace staff stationed in Brunei and to grow local capabilities to run the next Bridex or other defence related activities.

In the coming years, RBTS hopes to make the Ministry of Defence its strategic partner. RBTS, a government-owned company under the Prime Minister Corporation continues to move forward.

With the proper partnership and collaboration, RBTS hopes to have a role in managing services within the defence ministry such as operating and managing its maintenance centre in the future, to develop local maintenance capabilities.

Source: The Brunei Times